

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-12 DOE-15 SOE-02 TRSE-00 /090 W
-----106451 231815Z /50

P R 231753Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7050
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 05424

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MPOL, PINT, GW, US
SUBJECT: FRG REACTIONS TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPEECH
AT WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY

1. OFFICIAL FRG REACTION TO, AND MOST PRESS COMMENT ON,
THE PRESIDENT'S MARCH 17 SPEECH AT WAKE FOREST UNIVER-
SITY IN WINSTON-SALEM HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE.
IN SEPARATE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMBASSADOR THIS WEEK,
DEFENSE MINISTER APEL AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER
PRAISED THE PRESIDENT'S STRONG REAFFIRMATION OF
AMERICA'S INTENT TO PROTECT ITS INTERESTS AND ITS
ALLIES AROUND THE WORLD. BOTH WERE PLEASED AT THE
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EMPHASIS WHICH THE PRESIDENT GAVE TO WORKING CLOSELY
WITH OUR NATO ALLIES IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN AND MODERN-
IZE EUROPEAN DEFENSES. GENSCHER FOCUSED PARTICULARLY
ON THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS RE FLEXIBLE RESPONSE, AND
NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM. WE UNDERSTAND THAT
GENSCHER HAS ALSO INSTRUCTED THE FONMIN PRESS SPOKESMAN
TO BACKGROUND THE LOCAL PRESS CORPS WITH ADDITIONAL

FAVORABLE COMMENT ON THE MARCH 17 SPEECH AND GENERALLY ON THE STATE OF USG-FRG RELATIONS. SEVERAL FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO ASKED US FOR COPIES OF THE SPEECH.

2. THOUGH FRG BROADCAST MEDIA COVERED THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH, THE FRG PRESS COULD NOT DO SO BECAUSE OF A NEWSPAPER STRIKE WHICH DID NOT END UNTIL TUESDAY, MARCH 21. ALTHOUGH THE SPEECH AT THAT POINT WAS "OLD NEWS", SEVERAL NATIONAL PAPERS--ESPECIALLY THE RIGHT-CENTER "DIE WELT"--CARRIED LENGTHY EXCERPTS AND COMMENTED ON IT.

3. THE INDEPENDENT, CONSERVATIVE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (FAZ) GAVE THE SPEECH A GOOD DEAL OF COVERAGE.

A. IN A MARCH 22 EDITORIAL TITLED "CARTER'S WARNING TO MOSCOW", THE FAZ FOREIGN AFFAIRS EDITORIALIST ADELBERT WEINSTEIN WROTE THAT "AFTER A YEAR OF PROBING AND TESTING, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS FINALLY FOUND A POLITICAL LINE." WEINSTEIN VIEWED THE SPEECH AS A BLUEPRINT FOR A FUTURE USG STRATEGY WHICH BEARS THE IMPRINT OF BRZEZINSKI, SCHLESINGER, AND OTHERS WHO SEEK TO REINTRODUCE THE CONCEPT OF "LINKAGE" INTO USG DEALINGS WITH THE USSR. WEINSTEIN CALLED THE SPEECH A CONFIDENTIAL

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"SHOT ACROSS THE BOW" OF MOSCOW'S RECENT PROBES IN AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE SPEECH WAS ADDRESSED EQUALLY TO AMERICA'S ALLIES. WEINSTEIN CONCLUDED WITH A POINT HE HAS MADE IN EARLIER FAZ EDITORIALS, NAMELY THAT THE ALLIES MUST MAKE TWO BASIC DECISIONS AT THE NATO CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON THIS SPRING: AGREE TO PURCHASE THE AWACS SYSTEM AND TO SUPPORT A DECISION TO PRODUCE THE NEUTRON WEAPON.

B. IN A MARCH 23 EDITORIAL, WEINSTEIN OPINED THAT THE US CONGRESS WAS ALSO A MAJOR ADDRESSEE OF THE WINSTON-SALEM SPEECH. HE ARGUED THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL ONLY FIND CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR HIS POLICIES (SPECIFICALLY THE SALT AGREEMENT) BY CONVINCING THE COUNTRY THAT AMERICA WILL RETAIN ITS MILITARY SUPERIORITY AND THAT HE IS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN USG POWER.

4. ALSO ON MARCH 23, THE INDEPENDENT, LIBERAL, SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG (SZ) IN MUNICH CAME TO A SIMILAR CONCLUSION, IN AN ARTICLE TITLED "CARTER IN THE TEST OF STRENGTH." THE SZ WROTE THAT THE MARCH 17 SPEECH WAS "LINKAGE POLITICS IN ITS PUREST FORM", DIRECTED AT

SENATOR JACKSON AS MUCH AS AT BREZHNEV. THE EDITORIAL
SAID THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS NOW REAPING MUCH
OF WHAT IT HAD EARLIER SOWN WITH INEXPERIENCE, PROBING

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AND UNPREDICTABLE BEHAVIOR. IT FOUND NO AUSPICIOUS
SIGNS FOR A FUTURE CARTER-BREZHNEV MEETING.

5. PREDICTABLY, THE MOST CRITICAL EDITORIAL APPEARED
IN THE MARCH 22 EDITION OF "DIE WELT". TITLED "THE
INCONSISTENT PRESIDENT", THE ARTICLE DETECTED IN
PRESIDENT CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS A STRONG
INCONSISTENCY AND "AN IRRITATINGLY HIGH NUMBER OF
POSITION CHANGES." "DIE WELT" DID NOT THINK THAT THE
SPEECH HAD INCREASED THE PRESIDENT'S CREDIBILITY. IT
WONDERED TO WHAT EXTENT DOMESTIC POLITICS, INVOLVING

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CONCERNS OVER TRENDS IN THE US-USSR RELATIONSHIP, EXPLAINED THE MOTIVES FOR THIS SPEECH. THE EDITORIAL PERCEIVED CARTER'S PROBLEM AS FOLLOWS: THE USSR PROBES FOR ADVANTAGE IN THE CURRENT PERIOD OF "CREEPING IRRELEVANCE" WHICH HAS BEFALLEN THE USG SINCE VIETNAM AND WATERGATE, AND WASHINGTON CAN ONLY CHECK SUCH SOVIET EFFORTS WITH DEEDS, NOT WITH STRONG WORDS. IT EXHORTED THE PRESIDENT TO USE THE CONSIDERABLE LEVERS WHICH THE USG STILL HAS IN THE FIELDS OF ARMAMENT AND ECONOMIC POWER, IF IT WANTS TO DISCOVER WHETHER THERE IS ANY POINT TO NEGOTIATING WITH MOSCOW IN A FRAMEWORK OF DETENTE.
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